



Current State Assessment Completed

The Department of Health and Human Services ACCES Front Door Project has completed the Current State Assessment, phase 2 of a 4-phase project. The project seeks to improve the Department's **Front Door**, which refers to the ways in which clients are served. The Front Door also includes the infrastructure behind client service such as the phone system and how information is collected and stored. The **Current State** refers to how things exist today. By looking at what we currently have, we can identify where improvements are needed and where the best opportunities for improvements exist.

How was the assessment conducted? Over a period of 13 weeks, Core Project Team members sought feedback and evaluation from Department staff and stakeholders on all Department programs. The primary focus was on the District Offices and on the Division of Family Assistance (DFA) programs that people can apply for including TANF, Food Stamps, Medicaid and Healthy Kids, as well as many others. Review included the client application process and eligibility determinations, including but not limited to those that occur through hospitals, nursing homes, mental health centers and other community partners.

Department staff and stakeholders provided tremendous feedback in the form of 1300 Findings, Pain Points and Oppor-

tunities. Each are defined as follows:

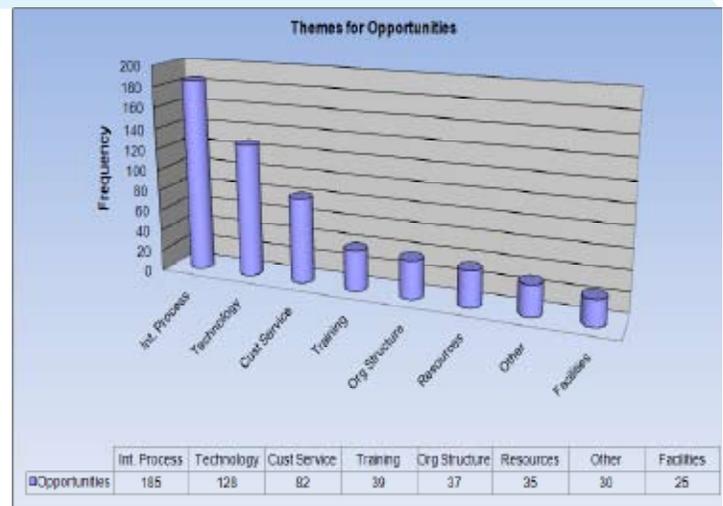
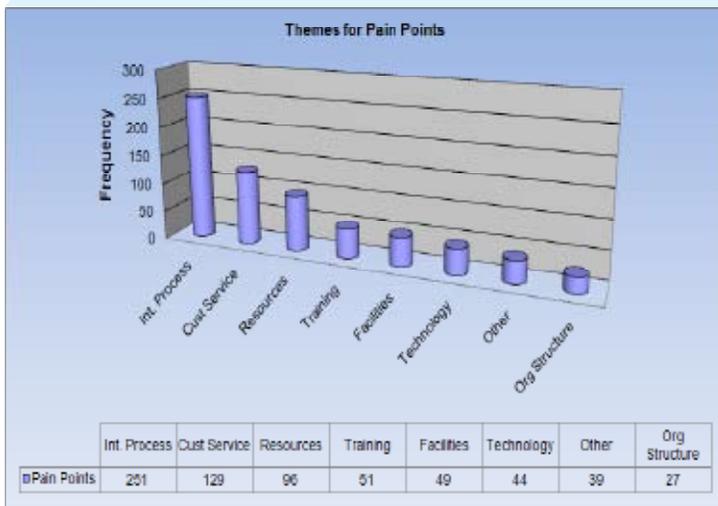
Finding: something that is ascertained, does not automatically have positive or negative implications

Pain Point: something that adds difficulty, time, confusion, cost or other "pain" to a work process or procedure

Opportunity: a situation that offers a favorable solution or approach toward a goal.

What did we learn? In order to make sense of the 1300 Findings, Pain Points and Opportunities, the Core Team reviewed them in the context of eight Themes and sorted them according to uniform criteria. A range of staff and stakeholders made some of the same points. Key Pain Points and Opportunities were also identified within each Theme.

The following tables provide an overview of the where Pain Points and Opportunities were identified. The primary theme identified was "Internal Processes," which refers to internal practices, policies or procedures related to the Front Door process. While internal processes were identified as burdensome and sometimes redundant and inefficient, in terms of opportunities for improvement, opportunities were envisioned with increased reliance on automation and technology.



The complete Current State Assessment Summary is posted on the DHHS website at: http://www.dhhs.state.nh.us/DHHS/DHHS_SITE/acces.htm along with other ACCES Front Door information and documents. The Current State Assessment Summary provides more detailed information on how the Current State Assessment Summary was conducted. It identifies the key Pain Points and Opportunities for each Theme and summaries of the findings within each Theme.

Purpose of ACCES - Front Door Project

To redesign and implement a DHHS Front Door process to achieve enhanced quality and efficient delivery of client services.

QUICK HITS: Improvement Projects Happening Now

Positive results are beginning to take shape in the DHHS ACCES Front Door Project. The ambitious four-phase project is being conducted over a one-year period, but there will be improvement projects happening throughout the course of the project through the identification and implementation of **Quick Hits**.

A Quick Hit is an improvement opportunity that is relatively quick and simple to make and provides immediate benefit. Over 20 Quick Hits have been identified but, after initial research and planning, some have been eliminated because they require more resources and planning. Three Quick Hit projects have already been implemented while the larger project continues. Here's a look at the first three Quick Hits.



1. Online Forms Added to DHHS Online Tools

Two application forms were added to the Department's main web page under **Online Tools**. The forms have been available online but less visible. The redesign boosts visibility and aids navigation. The forms:

- Application –General Assistance – for Food Stamps and other general assistance
- Application – LongTerm Medical Care, also known as the Medical Eligibility Determination (MED)

2. Domestic Violence Posters Added to District Office Bathrooms

This Quick Hit is for domestic violence posters for every Dis-

trict Office (DO) bathroom across the State, client bathrooms and staff. The DO is open to the public. The bathroom is one place that is private. Posting domestic violence information in the bathroom can provide an opportunity for a victim to privately tear off or write down the domestic violence information they may need.

3. Helpful Posters for Clients / Community Partners

Have you ever thought some forms or processes were too complicated and wished they were simpler? Several helpful staff within the Division of Family Assistance has developed posters listing tips on speeding up the application process. The posters are helpful for the District Office and for community partners. Examples:

When applying for benefits bring proof of the following with you:

1. Citizenship-original birth certificate for all household members;
2. Photo ID's for all household members
3. Expenses-rent, mortgage, property taxes, homeowner ins., utilities, childcare, child support, medical
4. Income-last four pay stubs, child support, SSI, unemployment, workers' comp, self employed (tax returns)
5. Resources-current bank statements (all household), stocks, bonds, retirement accounts, life ins policies
6. Residence – proof of where you are living

Quick Hits provide a number of benefits. For those already implemented, they have enhanced customer service and ease of service. In addition, the Quick Hits provide positive short-term results in a long-term project. The positive results helps to fuel further creative ideas and continued energy in the project. There are more Quick Hits in process and additional projects may be identified throughout the course of the project.

Major Process Improvement Project Underway at DFA

Improvement projects are being identified throughout the course of the ACCES Front Door initiative. One major project aimed at improving the way clients are served is streamlining the application process. For example, the Division of Family Assistance (DFA) is changing the way individuals or families apply for assistance. The new process involves clients setting-up appointments, instead of the current system that involves clients walking in, applying for services, then waiting, sometimes for hours, to be seen.



This new initiative will streamline the process for anyone applying for assistance through DFA. (DFA determines eligibility for New Hampshire residents for programs and services such as Food Stamps, Temporary Aid for Needy Families [TANF], and Medicaid.) Under this new process, clients will still complete an application at a District Office, then, based on potential eligibility they will be given an appointment within two

business days to return for an interview. A list of verifications and possible forms needed to complete their application will be provided at the same time they receive their appointment date so they can come to the interview prepared. Anyone determined eligible for expedited services will be seen the day they apply.

The new system was implemented in the Manchester District Office this past fall. District Offices in Rochester, Keene and Laconia switched to the appointment system on December 15; Nashua, Concord and Claremont switched on January 5; Littleton, Conway and Portsmouth will switch on January 27; and Berlin and Salem will transition to the new system on February 17.



Measuring Improvement

A **metric** is a standard for measuring or evaluating something. Metrics are usually specialized by subject area and are particularly useful in providing a comparison or to track performance or production over time.

Service Metrics refers to the metrics that are used to measure service quality and value. In DHHS, we collect all kinds of information: the numbers of applications filed; interviews conducted; applications processed; time until receipt of benefits... these are all metrics. The data over time provides service information and how it changes over time such as:

- Number of applications filed
- Staff caseloads
- Time period from application until receipt of benefit (varies by program type)

Employee Satisfaction is just one metric being tracked in the ACCES Front Door project. A Division of Family Assistance (DFA) employee job satisfaction survey was conducted in October 2008 and results tabulated. DFA job satisfaction will be surveyed on an ongoing basis and results tracked and compared. It is hoped that employee satisfaction will increase as some ACCES Front Door Improvement Projects are implemented.



*To provide your suggestions or feedback or to ask questions, please contact
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